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Letter dated 29 September 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the written statement of the delegation of Greece in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by Branko Crvenkovski, President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on 25 September 2008, at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly (see annex).

It would be highly appreciated if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 8.

(*Signed*) John **Mourikis**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 29 September 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Statement by Ambassador John Mourikis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, in exercise of the right of reply to the statement made by Mr. Branko Crvenkovski, President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

I would like to put the following statement on record in response to the statement made today by the President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Branko Crvenkovski, during the general debate of the sixty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Greece has, throughout the years, fully complied with the letter and spirit of Security Council resolutions 817 (1993) and 845 (1993) under which the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was admitted to membership in the United Nations. Greece proceeded to the bilateral negotiations pursuant to resolution 845 (1993) and the subsequent interim accord of 1995 concluded among the two parties, with goodwill and a spirit of compromise, wishing to assist in reaching an acceptable solution over the name issue under the auspices of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy.

Despite the above efforts, however, the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has shown during these years an utter disregard for the above-mentioned Security Council resolutions and an intransigent and uncompromising position during bilateral negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, thus preventing any progress therefrom or an amicable settlement of the difference between the two countries.

Even within the United Nations, the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has never used the name by which the two principal organs of the Organization decided that it should be provisionally referred to for all purposes within the United Nations, but, on the contrary, has always used the very name over which the Security Council has acknowledged the existence of a difference between the two countries.

Greece remains firmly committed to the bilateral negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations and to the need for a prompt and acceptable solution to the name issue that would take into consideration the legitimate interests and sensitivities of both countries and would solve a problem which is closely related to regional stability.

In this respect we would like to emphasize that any fair and acceptable solution to the name issue can only be achieved if no country attempts to assert exclusivity through the use of the name, thus monopolizing the wider geographic region of Macedonia.

Greece firmly believes that there should be no winners or losers in this effort, but rather that it should be understood that a speedy solution to the name issue is in the interest of both countries as well as of regional peace and stability. This is fully in line with Security Council resolution 817 (1993), which clearly stipulates that the name issue "needs to be resolved in the interest of the maintenance of peaceful and good neighbourly relations in the region".

25 September 2008